

Remarks

Claims 1-3, 5, 6, 9-15, and 17-23 are pending for the Examiner's consideration. Claims 1, 5, 6, 14, 18, 22, and 23 have been amended. Claims 4, 7, 8, and 16 have been canceled. No new matter is believed to have been added by the amendments presented herein. Support for the claim amendments can be found, for example, in applicants' specification at page 7, line 21 to page 8, line 12, as well as in FIG. 4.

In the Office Action, claims 1-3, 6-9, 11-12, 14, 15, and 18-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 00/11324 to Bangert *et al.* ("Bangert") in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,631,672 to Gentile *et al.* ("Gentile"). The rejection respectfully is traversed.

As understood, the combination of Bangert and Gentile fails to render obvious the inventions of amended independent claims 1, 14, 22, or 23, with the first and second ejectors and first and second extraction points as claimed. Neither Bangert nor Gentile is understood to disclose or suggest the use of first and second ejectors and first and second extraction points as claimed. As stated in applicants' specification, such an arrangement results in a type of self-regulation of the throughflow intensity. *See* Specification at p. 8, lines 3-6.

In the Office Action, claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bangert in view of Gentile, while claims 10, 13, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bangert in view of Gentile and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,782,076 to Huber *et al.* It is submitted that dependent claims 5, 10, 13, and 17 at least are patentable not only because of the patentability of the independent claim from which they depend, but also for the totality of features recited respectively therein.

Finally, claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bangert in view of Gentile and further in view of DE 507 129. This rejection has been rendered moot in view of the cancellation of dependent claim 7.

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all the pending claims are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. If the Examiner does not agree,

then a personal or telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues so as to expedite the eventual allowance of the claims.

A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) is submitted concurrently herewith. Should any additional fees be required, please charge any such fees to Steptoe & Johnson LLP Deposit Account No. 19-4293.

Date: July 24, 2007

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Seth A. Watkins", is written over a horizontal line.

Seth A. Watkins Reg. No. 47,169

STEPTOE & JOHNSON LLP

1330 Connecticut Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20036-1795

(202) 429-3000

Attachment